124 /128 cont'd/ business sense he had now accumulated a considerable amount of
143 property. At Mr. Li's invitation, we went with him to Wen-hua
347 market. This trading center was built only a few years ago, and now it had two streets and several ten's of thatched houses. The traders mostly were natives of the three districts of Wan-ning, Ling-shui,
[346] and Lo-hui. The place appeared deserted. In the middle of the trading center was an elementary school, but as it was now winter vacation, we did not have a chance to inspect it.

437 Just then a Miao arrived at the trading center, bringing rice for barter. We bartered two package of tobacco, a tin tablespoon, and some needles for three sheng of rice (24 liang in a pint). Actually, when we began our reckoning, the value of his goods was greater than that of ours, but he was completely satisfied /129/ for he apparently thought that he had gotten a good bargain. This also brings to light the condition of disparity in value, under which the bartering trade has been carried on between Chinese merchants and the Li and the Miao people.

796 At ten o'clock that evening, just as we were ready to go to bed, we suddenly heard the sound of gongs and drums approaching. On in-
755 quiring of the workmen of the Wang family, we learned that in the
796 neighboring village the family of a sick man was putting on a t'iao niang /"leaping women"/ service. This was something we did not want to miss, so we went in the dark to watch it. We did not know how far away it was, and all we could do was to go in the direction from which the sound of gongs and drums was coming. On the way we woke up the dogs in the village, and the sounds of barking began everywhere. When we reached the gates of the village, we saw
[201] under the moonlight a cordon of leaves at the entrance, which, according to Li custom, is a sign forbidding outsiders from entering the village. But since we had come such a long distance, we pretended not to see it and went ahead. When we reached the sick man's home, the t'iao niang had just begun. The three or four niang p'o /"old women"/ were all males. In the house hung five bronze gongs and a large drum, and with the disorderly striking of the former and thumping of the latter, a great confusion of noise was created. The